

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, UR

SUBJECT: SAN FRANCISCO-LENINGRAD CULTURAL EXCHANGE

REF: MOSCOW 2696

1. REFTEL ARRIVED AFTER CU/EE MEETING WITH PHILLIP BOONE
FEBRUARY 27. HOWEVER OUR ADVICE TO BOONE DID NOT DIFFER
IN SUBSTANCE FROM GUIDANCE PROVIDED REFTEL.

2. BOONE REVIEWED SAN FRANCISCO'S EFFORTS SINCE 1972 TO
ESTABLISH CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM WHICH HAD BEEN PRO-
POSED BY LENINGRAD OFFICIALS DURING VISIT THERE IN 1973
BY SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY. BOONE HAS BEEN WORKING THROUGH
SOVCONGEN ZINCHUK WHO UNTIL RECENTLY WAS SUGGESTING THAT
PROPOSED EXCHANGES BE CONDUCTED OUTSIDE OF US-USSR GENERAL
AGREEMENT. HOWEVER, ZINCHUK IS NOW REQUESTING THEY BE
CONDUCTED WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF AGREEMENT. BOONE SOUGHT
DEPARTMENT ASSURANCE THAT AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER
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(ACT) WOULD BE SELECTED AS OFFICIAL US PERFORMING ARTS

GROUP UNDER THE AGREEMENT. HE ALSO REQUESTED DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ON USEFULNESS OF SAN FRANCISCO'S EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH EXCHANGE PROGRAM WITH LENINGRAD AND ADVICE AS TO HOW HE SHOULD PROCEED. SAN FRANCISCO IS CURRENTLY CONSIDERING OFFERING SMALL ENSEMBLE (FIVE TO SIX MEMBERS) OF STUDENT

INSTRUMENTALISTS FROM SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATORY WITH REPERTOIRE OF CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY WORKS.

3. WE INFORMED BOONE THAT CU NEGOTIATIONS WITH ACT WERE PROCEEDING AND THAT PROSPECTS FOR ACT GOING TO USSR UNDER OFFICIAL EXCHANGE WERE RELATIVELY GOOD, PROVIDED AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED ON PLAYS TO BE PERFORMED, AND ON FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE TERMS. RE SAN FRANCISCO'S DIRECT EXCHANGES WITH LENINGRAD, WE SUGGESTED BOONE CONTINUE TO WORK THROUGH ZINCHUK BUT URGED HIM TO MAKE CONCRETE PROPOSALS. RE STUDENT ENSEMBLE, WE POINTED OUT RELATIVE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF COMMERCIAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL TOURS, AND SUGGESTED BOONE TRY TO ARRANGE NON-COMMERCIAL VISIT WITH LENINGRADE CONSERVATORY AS EXCHANGE PARTNER WITHOUT USG FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. WE ENCOURAGED HIM TO PROPOSE THE ENSEMBLE TO ZINCHUK BUT WERE NOT OVERLY OPTIMISTIC RE SOVIET ACCEPTANCE. WE ALSO URGED BOONE TO MAKE OTHER PROPOSALS WHICH WERE MORE

LIKELY TO BE ACCEPTED, SUCH AS EXCHANGE OF INDIVIDUAL CONDUCTORS, THEATER DIRECTORS, MUSEUM SPECIALISTS, ETC., AND TO OFFER TO RECEIVE LENINGRAD CULTURAL SPECIALISTS IN EXCHANGE, ON USUAL FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS (SENDING SIDE PAYS INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, RECEIVING SIDE PAYS LOCAL COSTS).

4. BOONE REQUESTED DEPARTMENT ASCERTAIN WHAT KINDS OF EXCHANGES LENINGRAD IS NOW PREPARED TO ACCEPT, AND TO HAVE APPROVED BY SOVIET MINCULT. HE WOULD FOLLOW UP WITH CONCRETE PROPOSALS TO ZINCHUK, BUT WISHES TO HAVE ASSURANCE THAT MINCULT APPROVAL WILL BE FORTHCOMING. REQUEST CONGEN LENINGRAD MAKE APPROPRIATE INQUIRIES AND ADVISE.

5. QUESTION OF CU FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE DID NOT ARISE, AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WE WOULD HOPE SAN FRANCISCO COULD COVER ALL COSTS. WE ALSO TOLD BOONE THAT QUESTION OF WHETHER PROPOSED EXCHANGES TAKE PLACE UNDER THE OFFICIAL AGREEMENT IS NOT CRUCIAL FOR US SIDE, BUT THAT WE COULD INCLUDE THEM UNDER AGREEMENT IF SOVIETS SO REQUESTED. WE OFFERED TO WORK CLOSELY WITH BOONE IN FACILITATING THESE EXCHANGES AND SUGGESTED HE DESIGNATE SOMEONE IN SAN FRANCISCO FOR LIAISON WITH THE DEPARTMENT. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE

BELIEVE IT VITAL THAT EMBASSY AND CONGEN SEND CU/EE COPIES OF ANY FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE THEY MAY HAVE WITH SAN FRANCISCO ON THESE EXCHANGES. WHILE WE WISH TO ENCOURAGE DIRECT EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE TWO CITIES TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, IT APPEARS INEVITABLE THAT DEPARTMENT, EMBASSY AND CONGEN LENINGRAD WILL BE INVOLVED, TO SOME

DEGREE, PARTICULARLY IF SOVIETS REQUEST EXCHANGES TAKE PLACE UNDER THE AGREEMENT.

6. IN OUR VIEW, LENINGRAD'S 1972 INITIATIVE APPEARS TO HAVE FALLEN VICTIM TO SEVERAL DEVELOPMENTS DURING INTERVENING PERIOD INCLUDING A) KIROV BALLET DEFECTIONS AND OTHER LENINGRAD CULTURAL DIFFICULTIES; B) MINCULT'S DESIRE TO CONTROL ALL SOVIET INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL EXCHANGES; AND C) CHANGE IN MINCULT LEADERSHIP. WHILE WE CAUTIONED BOONE THAT ROAD TO SUCCESS WOULD BE LONG AND ARDUOUS, WE NEVERTHELESS GAVE FULL ENCOURAGEMENT AND PROMISED ALL POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE. INGERSOLL

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